

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 01934 092352Z  
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00  
PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 OES-02 /038 W  
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R 090855Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9760  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 1934

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, KS, JA  
SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS

REF: SEOUL 741 (DTG 180641Z JAN 78)

1. DIRECTOR KONG NO-MYONG (GONG RO-MYUNG) OF MOFA ASIAN BUREAU DISCU  
SSED

KOREA-JAPAN ISSUES WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER MARCH 9.

2. KONG IS HOPEFUL THAT CONTINENTAL SHELF LEGISLATION  
WILL PASS THE DIET THIS SPRING. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE  
NEW LIBERALS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO VOTE AS INDIVIDUALS,  
AND THAT THE KOMEITO WOULD NOT OPPOSE THE BILL. THEREFORE,  
HE FELT, THE ONLY QUESTION WAS THE EXTENT OF THE LDP'S  
DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE PASSAGE, AS OPPOSED TO THEIR  
DESIRE TO AVOID A FUSS IN THE DIET. IF THE LEGISLATION  
DOES NOT PASS, KONG NOTED, IT WILL BE OVER FOUR YEARS  
SINCE THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED, AND THE INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION  
WILL STILL NOT HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED. THE  
ROK WILL THEN BE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT JAPAN IS  
NOT ACTING IN GOOD FAITH AND "THERE WILL BE A WHIRLPOOL  
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IN THE KOREA STRAITS". (HE DECLINED TO SPECULATE ON  
LIKELY ROK COUNTER-MEASURES, BUT HIS REFERENCE TO THE  
KOREA STRAITS SUGGESTS THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
TERRITORIAL SEA LEGISLATION MAY BE A FACTOR. WE  
UNDERSTAND FROM THE JAPANESE EMBASSY THAT THE ROKG HAS  
NOT YET REPLIED TO A JAPANESE PROPOSAL FOR MINOR  
MODIFICATION IN THE PROPOSED BASE LINE, WHICH WOULD

OTHERWISE IMPINGE ON THE JOINT FISHING ZONE SPECIFIED  
IN THE ROK-JAPAN FISHERIES AGREEMENT - REF A.)

3. REGARDING OTHER ASPECTS OF KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS,  
KONG WAS FAIRLY RELAXED. HE NOTED CONTINUING CONCERN  
OVER THE ADVERSE TRADE BALANCE, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER  
DISCUSSION IN THE PRESS RECENTLY, BUT HE SEEMED TO  
REGARD THE PROBLEM MORE AS CHRONIC THAN ACUTE. THE  
ROKG TAKES A FAVORABLE VIEW OF THE PROPOSED PRC-JAPAN  
PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY, AS CONTRIBUTING TO GOOD  
RELATIONS IN THE REGION. HE EXHIBITED SOME SEKPTICISM,  
HOWEVER, REGARDING THE REAL WILLINGNESS OF THE JAPANESE  
TO RESIST SOVIET PRESSURE, DESPITE THE PUBLIC REACTION  
SO FAR INDICATED.

4. DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF JAPANESE INTERCESSION  
ON BEHALF OF THE ROK PRISONERS IN VIETNAM, KONG SAID HE  
DID NOT THINK THE JAPANESE WERE IN A POSITION TO REPRESENT  
KOREAN INTERESTS THERE EFFECTIVELY. HE THOUGHT THE  
FRENCH WERE DOING ALL THEY COULD, AND THAT THE REAL  
OBSTACLE WAS HANOI'S UNWILLINGNESS TO IRRITATE  
PYONGYANG BY RELEASING THE THREE MEN. HE DOUBTED  
THAT ANY THIRD COUNTRY COULD DO MUCH ABOUT THAT  
UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

5. REGARDING PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTATIONS, KONG SAID  
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THAT A GROUP OF FORMER GENERALS AND DIPLOMATS IN THE  
KOREAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAD LEFT FOR JAPAN MARCH 8  
TO MEET WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE LDP FOR DISCUSSION  
OF SECURITY ISSUES. NO OPPOSITION ASSEMBLYMEN WERE IN THE GROUP  
(THERE IS ONE FORMER GENERAL, HIM HYONG-IL, IN THE NDP BUT HE  
DID NOT TAKE PART). THEY ARE EXPECTED TO REMAIN IN  
JAPAN LESS THAN A WEEK.  
SNEIDER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Subject:** DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS  
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